



NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEBRASKA

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
2433 N.W. 24th St., Lincoln, NE 68524-1801

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 20, 2014 3:45 p.m.

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Cleanup Continues, Missouri River Flood Threat Lessens

Cleanup efforts will continue this weekend in the northeastern Nebraska communities affected by recent tornados and severe weather. The National Weather Service has forecasted rain in northeastern Nebraska this weekend but levee breaks along the Big Sioux River have reduced flood risks. NEMA will continue to monitor river levels and participate in daily flood updates.

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

The NEMA field team and mobile emergency operations center in Pilger are working with emergency managers in the areas affected by storms earlier this week. The State Emergency Operations Center in Lincoln is open.

Wayne and Dixon County Updates

Persons who want to volunteer for tornado recovery in Wayne and Dixon County should report to the Wakefield Fire Hall, 405 Main St. between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. daily until further notice. Suggested minimum age of volunteers is 19 years, or bring parental consent if younger.

Cedar County Updates

Volunteers are needed in Cedar County to walk fields and clean up debris. Those interested should call 211 or 402-283-4464. Two locations have been set up for volunteers to register:

- Coleridge Community Center, 111 S. Main St. and
- Laurel-Concord High School, 502 Wakefield St.

Volunteers must be 18 years old, wear work clothes, sturdy shoes, long pants, hats, work gloves, safety glasses and bring insect repellent and sunscreen. Busses will transport volunteers and eliminate parking and traffic at farmsteads. The Laurel lunch wagon will be serving meals at the United Presbyterian Church. Contact Laurel Economic Development Office at 402-256-9614.

Individuals needing resources in Cedar County, should call 402-283-9111.

Pilger Updates

- **Hours of operation**— in Pilger are now 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- **Scams potential**— Disaster-related activities can result in scams. Residents in the affected communities are urged to be aware of what services they choose to accept. A multi-agency resource center (MARC) is set up the Wisner Pilger High School to help residents with appropriate guidance during the recovery process.

- **Asbestos**—No building demolition will be allowed until it has been confirmed that the structure does not contain asbestos by the Department of Health and Human Services.
- **Water, sewer and trash billing** — Pilger Village Board is working on a resolution to suspend water, sewer and trash billing for Pilger resident through August.
- **Severe weather plan**—Once lightning is observed clean up activity will cease until a least an hour after last occurrence. Incident Command staff will monitor conditions and take actions based on the need during any thunderstorm watches. All recovery efforts will cease and town evacuated during thunderstorm warnings, tornado watches or tornado warnings. Law enforcement and military staff will provide community-wide notification when a need to evacuate exists.
- **Village Message Board**—Pilger residents should check the message board set up at the village registration site. Village messages will be posted and changed as needed.
- **Volunteers with chainsaws, pickup or torches are needed** —can check in at the volunteer check in stations near the ball field in Pilger.
- **New Shoes to be Distributed in Pilger** San Antonio Shoemakers, a Texas-based manufacturer and retailer of shoes will distribute 1,000 pairs of new American-made comfort shoes. SAS will also have everyday essentials such as T-shirts and socks available for distribution on a first-come, first-served basis at the Wisner City Auditorium located at the corner of 10th Street and Avenue D.

Wakefield

Volunteers should check in at the Wakefield Fire Hall at 405 Main St. between 9 a.m.-3 p.m. daily. Wear work clothes, long pants, and sturdy, closed-toed shoes. Volunteers need to be at least 19 years old or bring parental consent.

Volunteers who have equipment or who can offer specialized skills, such as chainsaw and heavy equipment operation, or with trucks and trailers to haul debris, are asked to call the hotline for placement (402) 287-2574. Homeowners should also call the hotline with volunteer requests.

People with donations may also call the Hotline (402) 287-2574. Monetary donations may be taken to the United Way Fund through the Wayne and Wakefield area banks.

Red Cross

The Wisner shelter (housed in the Wisner-Pilger Junior-Senior High) will remain open until further notice. The shelter is unable to house pets, but the Red Cross has boarding options available to those in need. Health services are available for those dealing with lost medications, lost durable medical equipment, and to assist with injuries. Meals are being provided by the Salvation Army and Red Cross.

Volunteering

Nebraska Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NE VOAD) is coordinating with various organizations that are volunteering to assist. Some of the organizations currently providing on-the-ground assistance include Mennonite Disaster Service, World Renew, Noah's Canine Crisis Response Dogs, Red Cross, Team Rubicon, Christian Aid Ministries, Serve Nebraska, All Hands Volunteers, Southern Baptists, the Salvation Army, and Samaritan's Purse.

Volunteers may arrive at Wisner-Pilger Junior-Senior High, 801 18th St., at 6:30 a.m. to register. Registration for the day will end at 3 p.m. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age.

Volunteers will work in Pilger between 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. Volunteers must have a photo I.D. and will be bused in to Pilger and assigned groups to perform debris removal. Volunteers must check-in each day at the Wisner-Pilger Junior-Senior. High – volunteers from a previous day will **NOT** be allowed into Pilger without going to the school first. Volunteers who arrive directly in Pilger will **NOT** be allowed to enter the town.

American Red Cross Info:

The Red Cross is also participating in the Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) that has been established at Wisner-Pilger High School. MARC provides an easy, one-stop shop atmosphere where affected families are able to visit with multiple agencies to receive a combination of services.

Five emergency response vehicles are in these hard hit communities and have delivered nearly 10,000 meals, snacks and waters. Since the tornadoes passed, more than 100 well-trained Red Cross disaster workers have been hard at work distributing hydration, snacks, work gloves, trash bags, rakes, giving comfort and hope to all.

The emergency shelter for Pilger will remain open and will serve as a place for residents and workers to gather a safe place to stay, a meal, minor first aid, and a shoulder to lean on should they need it. It is located at: Wisner-Pilger High School, 801 18th St., Wisner, NE (402) 529-3249.

Donations

Monetary donations continue to be the best way to help citizens affected by the storm. Multiple funds have been. The funds listed below are the funds that NEMA is aware of at this time. **Please contact NEMA with additional fund information to be added to future news releases.**

Pilger financial donations can be made at any Midwest Bank branch, referencing the “Pilger Emergency Fund.” Checks may be mailed to:

Pilger Emergency Fund
Midwest Bank, Norfolk Branch
2501 West Benjamin Ave.
PO Box 886
Norfolk, NE 68702-0886

Donations for Six rural Stanton families can be made at the Stanton State Bank, referencing the “Stanton Tornado Relief Fund.” Checks may be mailed to:

Stanton Tornado Relief Fund
Stanton State Bank
PO Box 437
Stanton, NE 68779

Pilger and Stanton survivors, financial donations can be made at the Stanton State Bank, referencing the “Pilger/Stanton Tornado Relief Fund.” may be mailed to:

Pilger/Stanton Tornado Relief Fund
Stanton State Bank
PO Box 437
Stanton, NE 68779

Laurel Tornado Relief can be made at Security Bank, Laurel, 202 E. Second St., Laurel, NE 68745 during regular business hours.

Coleridge Tornado Relief can be made at Security Bank – Coleridge, 101 W Broadway, Coleridge, NE 68727 during regular business hours.

Those who would like to help by making a donation to **American Red Cross Disaster Relief** can do so by visiting www.redcross.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS or texting the word REDCROSS to 90999 to make a \$10 donation.

A new collection site for **material donations** (no clothes or shoes) has been set up at the Wisner Auditorium. This site will be open from June 22 to July 2. Items will be used by people directly affected by the storm.

Nebraska National Guard

Twenty Nebraska Army National Guard Soldiers from the 189th Transportation Company from Norfolk and Wayne continue to serve on State Active Duty in Pilger, where they are assisting local officials in maintaining public safety in and around the community following Monday afternoon's devastating storms. The Soldiers are working primarily at four entry control points leading into Pilger.

Nebraska State Fire Marshal

State Fire Marshal, Jim Heine, has received inquiries from homeowners wishing to begin burning houses destroyed by the storm. He urged residents to contact their insurance agents before proceeding.

Fire Marshal staff continues to be available to perform damage assessment of commercial and residential structures. Contact the State Fire Marshal's main office at 402-471-2027 for more information.

Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Greg Ibach continues to encourage producers who suffered livestock losses due to the tornado to keep detailed records documenting those losses as they continue to work to address storm damage.

Documentation could include third-party verification of the loss, such as a statement from a veterinarian or county extension agent, photographs, or receipts for expenses associated with carcass removal / disposal.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) to determine what type of documentation might best fit their circumstances. Federal programs such as the Livestock Indemnity Program are available for qualified producers.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has monetary assistance available to help producers affected by the tornado to properly dispose of animal carcasses through a special Livestock Mortality Initiative through NRCS' Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Livestock producers who experienced death losses are encouraged to contact their local NRCS office to sign up for the Initiative and to work with NRCS staff to develop a recovery plan that best meets the needs of their operation. NRCS can also assist in windbreak repair, replacing fences and repairing terraces and other conservation practices. Interested producers need to contact the local NRCS office as soon as possible.

NDA has sent a Livestock Emergency Disease Response System (LEDRS) trailer with supplies to the affected area. NDA staff members are helping to coordinate relief efforts from the State

Emergency Operations Center and working with sister state agencies such as the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to assure the state is addressing producer needs.

Ibach also encourages individuals that have sustained crop damage in recent weeks to share that information with their local Farm Service Agency as well for any additional federal programs that might be available.

Counselors are available to those individuals that are feeling stressed and overwhelmed by the circumstances. Those individuals are encouraged to call the Rural Response Hotline at 800-464-0258.

Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ)

Questions are surfacing about debris removal in rural areas where structure debris removal policies for communities do not apply. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) has been visiting property owners in affected rural areas around Pilger and Wakefield. NDEQ is providing property owners with debris management guidance and reminding them to talk with their insurance companies before disposing of any materials.

DEQ and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) staff have also met with local administrators and fire department officials to discuss the requirements for burning debris materials. In rural areas, landowners are in many cases allowed to bury or burn debris on their agricultural property. "Fires set in an agricultural operation" includes "the burning of any trees or vegetation indigenous to the property of the owner or person in lawful possession of the land", according to NDEQ Rules and Regulations. A Guidance Document explaining open burning requirements can be found at <http://deq.ne.gov/Publications/Pages/07-029>.

Residents are encouraged to contact their local fire chief or emergency manager for specifics about debris removal policies in their local area. A wide selection of information regarding storm recovery can be found on NDEQ's website at <http://deq.ne.gov>. On that page, look for a link in the bottom right box labeled "Storm Recovery Environmental Guidance".

Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR)

Highway 15 remains closed from Highway 275 (north of Pilger) to Highway 32 (south of Pilger). U.S. Highway 275 is open, but people are advised not to stop or walk on the roadway. **Goal is to have Highway 15 open by Monday.**

Nebraska Energy Office

Ginger Willson, director of the Nebraska Energy Office, encourages residents, business owners, nonprofits, farm and ranch operations, agri-business, local governments and schools to contact the Nebraska Energy Office about energy efficiency, renewable energy, and waste minimization projects that can be financed at low-interest rates.

The Nebraska Energy Office has monetary assistance available in all sectors to help finance energy efficient projects through the Dollar and Energy Savings Loan Program. Projects submitted in the affected areas will be expedited in support of the recovery efforts. Financing is available for replacement furnaces, air conditioners, heat pumps, water heaters, windows, doors, insulation, roofing, siding, refrigerators, freezers, dishwashers, clothes washers, home electronics and office equipment. Other projects available for low-interest financing include

irrigation systems, grain dryers, no-till farm equipment, pumps, motors and equipment used for waste mitigation.

Nebraska Energy Office staff is also available to provide free technical assistance related to energy efficiency code questions and blueprint reviews.

Please call the Nebraska Energy Office at 402.471.2867 or visit the Energy Office's website at <http://www.neo.ne.gov> for more information.

Nebraska State Patrol

The Nebraska State Patrol's (NSP) Mobile Command Post remains on scene with troopers continuing to provide security for Pilger. NSP is coordinating vehicular access to the community for residents and volunteers. NSP personnel continue to provide assets and resources as requested.

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, feeling lost and overwhelmed is normal. But as recovery goes on, stress can cause physical symptoms, like upset stomach, headaches, and muscle tension. Signs and symptoms of stress overload include moodiness, anxiety, irritability, constant worrying, the inability to relax, feeling overwhelmed, a sense of loneliness or isolation, and feelings of depression.

People experiencing stress can call the Region IV Behavioral Health System office at (402) 370-3100 or the Rural Response Hotline at (800) 464-0258.

The community of Thurston's public water supply lost pressure due to storms Tuesday night. For that reason there is a boil alert for the community until further notice.

The Pilger water supply is still under a boil alert until further notice.

If people have public health-related questions, they can contact their local health department. Here is a link to a list of local health departments in the state:

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Documents/contacts.pdf>

Nebraska Department of Insurance

The Nebraska Insurance Department offers these tips for individuals affected by recent storms:

- Contact your insurance company or agent as soon as you can.
- Take temporary measures to reduce further damage **but do not dispose of damaged property or make permanent repairs until your insurance company has inspected the damage**. Keep copies of expenses related to temporary repairs.
- If you need to relocate, keep receipts for your temporary living expenses.
- Maintain copies of all correspondence and take notes of your telephone conversations, including date and time of contact and name of person to whom you spoke.
- Obtain references, written estimates, proof of insurance and your insurance company's approval before authorizing a contractor to begin repairs.

If people have insurance-related questions or concerns, please call the Department of Insurance on its toll-free consumer hotline at 1-877-564-7323 or visit the Department's website at <http://www.doi.nebraska.gov>.

Nebraska Department of Revenue

Many Nebraskans and Nebraska businesses have been directly affected by the tornados in the Pilger area and Stanton County. The Nebraska Department of Revenue understands the difficulties that these catastrophic storms present with regard to tax responsibilities and wants to help those impacted by this disaster. The Department will work with businesses and individuals on any taxes due, including sales tax returns due June 20, 2014 if you do not have access to your computer, files, or tax records. The Department is also willing abate any penalties and interest.

The Department also has information on its website at revenue.nebraska.gov about what to do if your records are destroyed, temporary places of business, and real property valuations and damage due to natural disasters. If you are having difficulty filings returns or paying taxes that are due, please contact the Department for assistance at 800-742-7474.

National Weather Service Valley/Omaha

- The Big Sioux River at Sioux City has crested. The crests show that less water than originally modeled will move through the Missouri River.
- Levee breaks upstream along the Big Sioux River have allowed some water to leave the system. While this is bad for those affected by those levee breaks, it means less water downstream
- Overflowing banks has reduced flows by up to 1 percent in some areas.
- The forecasts crests have dropped from up to downstream. Some locations remain above flood stage.
- There is the potential for heavy rain tonight over the tri-state border below Gavins Point.

Flood links

<http://www.nema.ne.gov/newsroom/flooding-information.shtml>

<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/flooding.aspx>

<http://www.ready.gov/floods>

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps/flood>

Missouri River—11:15 a.m. Friday, June 20

Verdel – 15.65 feet, flood stage is 24 feet
Niobrara – 13.85 feet, flood stage is 21 feet,
South Sioux City – 23.76 feet, flood stage is 30 feet
Decatur – 30.73 feet, flood stage is 35 feet
Blair – 24.57 feet, flood stage is 26.5 feet
Omaha – 25.25 feet, flood stage is 29 feet

Plattsmouth – 26.29 feet, flood stage is 26 feet
Nebraska City – 19.1 feet, flood stage is 18 feet
Brownville – 33.76 feet, flood stage is 33 feet
Rulo – 18.22 feet, flood stage is 17 feet

Additional information, photos, and videos can be found on the following NEMA sites: <https://www.facebook.com/nema.page>, <http://www.youtube.com/user/TheNEMAtube>, and <https://twitter.com/NEMAtweets>

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